

CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.

Youth and Adult Histories of Federal Offenders in Custody: 2020

Indigenous federal offenders have had more involvement than non-Indigenous in the criminal justice system.

Why we are doing this study

The criminal record of every offender admitted and re-admitted to federal custody is systematically documented at time of admission for prior youth (<18) and/or adult history. Indicators gathered include convictions, court dispositions and outcomes. These variables are an element of objective assessment procedures that serve as part of the overall decision-making for classifying criminal offenders globally.

What we did

Correctional Service Canada's intake assessment and correctional planning process standardizes the recording of previous exposure to the criminal justice system and corrections in the Offender Management System (OMS). Data were drawn from the Criminal History Record section at mid-year 2020-21 for the federal in-custody population. Indicators were available for the majority of Indigenous and non-Indigenous offenders. Missing data are due to legacy and in-progress cases.

What we found

OMS-reported data show that both Indigenous men and women in federal custody have higher rates of previous youth and adult histories than non-Indigenous.

Percentage Youth and Adult History: Men

Indicator	Indigenous (3,347)	Non-Indigenous (7,182)
Previous Offence - Youth	65.8%	42.1%
<i>Type of Convictions</i>		
Scheduled ¹	43.4%	25.9%
<i>Youth Court Dispositions</i>		
Community supervision	61.8%	37.7%
Open custody	33.2%	18.7%
Secure custody	40.7%	32.0%
Previous Offences-Adult	88.9%	78.1%
<i>Type of Convictions</i>		
Scheduled	77.0%	63.4%
<i>Adult Court Dispositions</i>		
Community supervision	81.0%	68.9%
Provincial Terms	80.5%	64.4%
Federal Terms	36.2%	30.2%
<i>Previous Disciplinary Infractions</i>	43.5%	33.6%
<i>Previous Attempt/UAL/Escape</i>	22.9%	18.3%

¹ As per the Corrections and Conditional Release Act – Scheduled offences include violent (excluding murder) and serious drug offences.

Percentage Youth and Adult History: Women

Indicator	Indigenous (238)	Non-Indigenous (297)
Previous Offences - Youth	39.1%	17.5%
<i>Type of Convictions</i>		
Scheduled ¹	28.8%	9.8%
<i>Youth Court Dispositions</i>		
Community supervision	33.8%	15.9%
Open custody	14.4%	15.9%
Secure custody	15.4%	6.5%
Previous Offences-Adult	80.1%	57.0%
<i>Type of Convictions</i>		
Scheduled	59.7%	35.0%
<i>Adult Court Dispositions</i>		
Community supervision	73.3%	49.3%
Provincial Terms	63.9%	41.0%
Federal Terms	13.1%	10.7%
<i>Previous Disciplinary Infractions</i>	26.2%	10.6%
<i>Previous Attempt/UAL/Escape</i>	11.1%	9.8%

¹ As per the Corrections and Conditional Release Act – Scheduled offences include violent (excluding murder) and serious drug offences.

What it means

The disproportionate representation of Indigenous people in federal custody may partly be attributed to disparity in more youth and adult history in the criminal justice system and thus sustained efforts are needed to improve safe reintegration results. More criminal justice and community development work is required to mitigate against previous exposure to the criminal justice system and corrections environment with a culturally sensitive focus for Indigenous offenders.

For more information

Please e-mail the [Research Branch](#) or contact us by phone at (613) 995-3975.

You can also visit the [Research Publications](#) section for a full list of reports and one-page summaries.

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